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2. Claims 7-9 stand rejected under 35 USC§112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. More particularly, the terms "ultra high molecular weight polyethylene" and "ultra high molecular weight polypropylene" are deemed by the Examiner to render these claims indefinite since it is unclear whether reference is had to the weight average or number average molecular weight. Applicants respectfully disagree and request withdrawal of these rejections.

With reference to "ultra high molecular weight polypropylene," Applicants' specification on page 13, lines 9-12, explicitly sets forth acceptable weight average molecular weight ranges for its ultra high molecular weight polypropylene.

With reference to "ultra high molecular weight polyethylene," numerical limits for the molecular weight are set forth on page 13. Nowhere in Applicants' specification is there reference to a number average molecular weight. On pages 13 and 14 of Applicants' specification, there are several references to weight average molecular weight ranges. Furthermore, one of ordinary skill in the art knows that the current patent application follows in a series of over fifty United States patents, assigned to AlliedSignal Inc. (now Honeywell International Inc.) and dealing with ultra high molecular weight polyethylene fibers. Several of these are set forth in the present invention as background (specification, pages 1-3). The very first patent in this series, USP 4,403,012 at column 2, lines 7-19, defines its ultra high molecular weight polyolefin fibers in terms of the weight average molecular weight. This same definition may also be found in U.S. Patent 4,457,985 at column 2, lines 27-35, and in others of the issued patents. This definition is fully consistent with the current specification.

In light of the teachings of the present disclosure and the prior art, as well as the claim interpretation that would be given by one possessing the ordinary level of skill in the pertinent art at the time that this invention was made, it is respectfully submitted that claims 7-9 do set out and circumscribe the subject matter with a reasonable degree of clarity and particularity. Accordingly, reconsideration of the rejection of Claims 7-9 is respectfully requested.

3. Claim 14 also stands rejected under 35 USC§112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. More particularly, the term "robust structure" is deemed by the Examiner to be a relative term. Applicants respectfully disagree. This term is defined in Applicants' specification on page 7, lines 2-3, where it states that "the domain matrix binds the fibers in a unitary structure that is easily handled without a tendency to separate or spread." At lines 19-21 of the same page, it is further stated that "[b]y maintaining its integrity and ability to be handled, it means that the fibrous polymer composite retains its structure without yarn separation during processing and use." It is submitted that one of ordinary skill

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in the art would readily know and understand what constitutes a robust structure. Applicants therefore respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

4. Claim 21 stands rejected under 35 USC§112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. More particularly, the Examiner rejects claim 21 for failing to specify the comparison fabric. Accordingly, claim 21 has been amended to incorporate language (specification, page 32, lines 17-18) specifying the comparison fabric. Reconsideration of amended Claim 21 is respectfully requested.

5. Claims 22 and 23 stand rejected under 35 USC§112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. More particularly, the Examiner deems these claims to be unclear since the units of the flexibility measure are not stated. Applicants respectfully disagree. Flexibility is defined at pages 23-24 of the application as the ratio of h/l measured in the prescribed manner. The ratio, having the same units in both numerator and denominator, is dimensionless. However, although a pure number (dimensionless), this number is definite. Accordingly, reconsideration of the rejection of Claims 22 and 23 is respectfully requested.

6.-7. Claims 1-2, 7, 11-12, 14-15, 17 stand rejected under 35 USC§102(b) as being anticipated by Schirtzinger, U.S. Patent No. 3,686,048.

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of canceled claim 18, and as such, now recites a limitation on a planar dimension of the matrix islands that has no counterpart in the disclosure of Schirtzinger.

"A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described in a single prior art reference." *Verdegaal Bros. V Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). "The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the claim." *Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co.*, 868 F.2d 1226, 1236, 9 USPQ2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989).

Since Schirtzinger fails to teach each and every element set forth in amended claims 1 (and thus, each of claims 7, 11-12, 14-15, 17 which directly depend from claim 1), reconsideration of the foregoing rejections is respectfully requested.

8.-9. Claims 1-23 stand rejected under 35 USC§103(a) as being unpatentable over Schirtzinger (USP 3,686,048) in view of Li et al. (WO 91/08895).

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of canceled claim 18, and as such, now recites a limitation on a planar dimension of the matrix islands that has no

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counterpart in the disclosures of Schirtzinger and/or Li et al. Furthermore, neither of these references suggests this planar dimension limitation. Li et al., in fact, requires a rigid matrix for its impact resistant rigid composite articles. In contrast, Applicants' composite articles are extremely flexible.

"To establish *prima facie* obviousness of a claimed invention, all the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art." *In re Royka*, 490 F.2d 981, 180 USPQ 494, 496 (CCPA 1974). "If an independent claim is nonobvious under 35 USC 103, then any claim depending therefrom is nonobvious." *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ 2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988).

Applicants respectfully submit that a *prima facie* case of obviousness is not established for amended claim 1 and claims 2-23 that depend directly or indirectly therefrom.

In light of the foregoing amendment and remarks, it is submitted that the claims now of record, i.e. claims 1-23, are allowable and should be passed to issue. Applicants respectfully request the same. The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney if there are any unresolved issues to discuss same.

Respectfully submitted,
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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Patent & Trademark Office via facsimile to Examiner Cole, Group Art Unit 1771, at 703-872-9310 on February 9, 2001.

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